

Staines Road Surgery

Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure

Purpose

To comply with legislation and best practice with respect to Equality of Opportunity for all employees and patients. Recognising and valuing equally an individual's experience, skills and knowledge and encouraging and promoting diversity.

The aims and objectives of the Equality and Diversity Policy are:

- To promote diversity in all areas of the service.
- To ensure equal opportunities in all areas and access to all posts, including paid and voluntary work, to ensure compliance with required legislation such as age, sex discrimination, employment equality, race relations and the Disabled Persons Employment Acts.
- To create an environment, within the workplace, free from harassment, which is pro-diversity and anti-discriminatory.
- To ensure that all staff in the Practice agree to accept and implement this policy.
- To ensure you are a fair employer, treating all staff fairly and equally and to recruit, develop and retain a workforce to meet the diverse needs of all individuals.
- To take positive steps to ensure, as far as is possible, that the Practice's premises and services are accessible to all people including those with disabilities;

Applicable to:

All employees and patients.

Policy

Staines Road Surgery aims for high standards both as an employer and as a provider of services. We recognise the need for encouraging and promoting diversity and support a policy of equal opportunities in all areas of work. The policy will address any appropriate areas which fall within this policy which currently may not be covered by legislation. Failure to follow the procedures in the policy may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action.

The Practice's aims and objectives will be achieved through forward planning, and effective monitoring and an annual review of the policy will be put in place.

The Practice will regularly review the implementation of its Equality and Diversity Policy and strategy. Where evidence is found of ineffectiveness, immediate remedial action will be taken to ensure implementation.

General Principles

- **Direct discrimination** occurs when treating an individual less favourably than you would treat somebody else in the same circumstances i.e. on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, sexuality and disability of any kind.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs when a requirement or condition of employment has the effect of discriminating unfairly between one group or another or an individual e.g. a rule around clothing that may disadvantage a particular ethnic group.
- **Victimisation** occurs when an individual is given less favourable treatment than others because they have exercised their rights under a particular policy or legislation i.e Sex, Race or Disability Act or have supported somebody else who has made a complaint re discrimination.
- **Harassment/Bullying** undermines an individual's dignity and effectiveness at work due to action, behaviour, verbal or physical contact which is unwanted and not reciprocated and which may cause offence and may threaten an employee and/or create an intimidating environment. Harassment can be directed against an individual regarding disability, sexuality or racial comments.
- **Equal Opportunities** ensure that policies, procedures do not discriminate against the people within it and is about treating people fairly and equally regardless of their lifestyle choices, ethnicity, culture, race etc. Any action found to be in breach of the policy may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

Staines Road Surgery aims to be an equal opportunities employer and no employee or patient should receive less favourable treatment due to race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; sex; marital status or caring responsibility; sexual orientation; age; physical, sensory or learning disability; mental health; political or religious beliefs; class; HIV status; employment status; unrelated criminal convictions; union activities.

The Practice will have the responsibility of monitoring the effectiveness of the Equality and Diversity Policy in consultation with staff groups and other representatives and introduce positive action if it is deemed the policy is not being fully implemented.

- **Diversity** ensures that all people are valued equally as individuals and are recognised for their potential and contribution to the Practice taking account of their experience, knowledge and skills, acquired from different backgrounds and providing a new and innovative approach.

The way in which we work, train and learn within the Practice reflects both the mission and objectives of the Practice and the spirit and intentions of legislation that outlaws discrimination and promotes equality and diversity.

The Practice will ensure that its services are non-discriminatory, enabling equality of access and provision and that it meets the requirements of all relevant legislations

- **Positive Action** refers to measures which may be taken in order to overcome inequality in accordance with relevant legislation. This may take the form of additional training within the job role and/or considered reasonable adjustments which could include the physical environment.
- The Practice will advise staff to be aware of less obvious discrimination which could result from pre-conceptions about attitudes, capabilities and interests of individuals. Any incidents of abuse will be challenged and acted upon appropriately.

Policy Guidelines

Recruitment and Selection

- All decisions concerning recruitment must be based on objective and job related criteria and must be applied fairly and consistently.
- All posts, once advertised, should cover job descriptions and person specification along with relevant policies such as equal opportunities and diversity. The advertisement should ensure the widest possible range of candidates and not imply any preferred group unless a genuine occupational qualification exists which, in turn, may limit a post to a particular group.
- If a person specification includes 'essential' and/or 'desirable' requirements these must be proved necessary and justifiable and not discriminatory.
- New employees should undergo a comprehensive induction programme which will include training in equality, diversity and human rights. All employees should have individual reviews and development plans usually in the form of regular one-to-one's and through a process of an annual appraisal to re-evaluate and promote the individual's skills and experience.
- Interviewing and selection processes should reflect the gender, disability and ethnic makeup of the Practice when selecting the panel.
- The shortlisting panel will not discriminate against age, gender and/or disability of the candidate and on interview, the panel must not ask discriminatory questions to the candidate unrelated to the requirement of the job. This may be in the form of race, colour, ethnicity, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs etc.

Learning and Development and Training

- Staines Road Surgery will not discriminate in providing training courses, mentoring, or promotion wherever possible. Appropriate training will be provided to enable all staff to perform their roles effectively and the training will take into account individual requirements.

Procedure

Policy Requirements

- The Practice will be responsible for implementing and developing the policy. The overall co-ordinating responsibility for equal opportunities and management of diversity is delegated to the Registered Manager. However, the Practice believes that all employees have an individual responsibility to accept the policy and ensure a personal involvement in its overall application.
- Staff are responsible for co-operating with measures to ensure equal opportunity and that people have equality of opportunity in all areas of access provision.
- All staff must inform the relevant manager if they suspect or are aware that any form of discrimination has taken place. Individuals must not discriminate, harass, abuse or intimidate other employees.
- The manager must ensure the maintenance of the necessary records of employment decisions and practices to make clear to employees the policy on equality and diversity and all supporting policies in relation to both employment and service issues.
- To promote equality by their own behaviour and action.
- To ensure that complaints and/or grievances under this policy and dealt with in a fair and consistent manner and are in line with the relevant policies and procedures.

Policy Enforcement – Complaints and Grievances

- Any staff member, who feels they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination or unfairly treated should raise the issue through the Grievance Procedure.
- Any patient who feels that they have been unfairly treated in a way contrary to the intention of this policy should make a complaint through the Practice's Registered Manager, who must report any such complaint to the Registered Provider. If the complaint is about the Registered Manager, this should be made directly to the Registered Provider.
- Any job applicant or patient who believes that they have been treated unfairly and contrary to the intention of this policy should raise the issue with the Registered Manager or the Registered Provider.
- All incidents of direct or indirect discrimination by staff are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

- All incidents of direct discrimination by patients will be dealt with in the first instance by the Registered Manager, and in the event of a failure to agree satisfactory remedies, will be dealt with under the terms of the Patient agreement.
- Incidents of victimisation, harassment or bullying will be dealt with in accordance with the Practice's Harassment Policy and Procedure.

Disciplinary Procedure

- Any member of staff found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Standard Terms of Employment.
- Any patient found in breach of this policy will, where appropriate, be spoken to about their actions and may, where necessary, be refused future services from the Practice.

Monitoring

- The Registered Provider and Registered Manager will regularly monitor and annually review the Equality and Diversity Policy and all other relevant procedures embraced by this policy.